

# Fences, Trellises, and Arbors

## Facts About Fences

### When do I need a permit?

If your fence is six feet high or less, it may be built on the property line. No building permit is required, unless your property is located in an environmentally critical area.

If the fence is over six feet high, a building permit is required. The fence will need to be set back on your property from your property line to the minimum “yard setbacks” for your zoning district. Typical yard setbacks for single family residential zones are as follows:

Street: 20’ from front property line

Side: 5’ minimum from side; two sides together must equal 15’.

Rear: 15’ from rear property line

If you live on a street corner, you have two front (street) yard setbacks and two side yard setbacks. You don’t have a rear yard setback.

### Friendly Fences

The City of Shoreline recommends that your front yard fence be no more than 3 feet 6 inches high. This makes our neighborhoods friendly and safe, and reduces crime by increasing visibility and reducing “hiding places”.

### Sight Distance Triangle

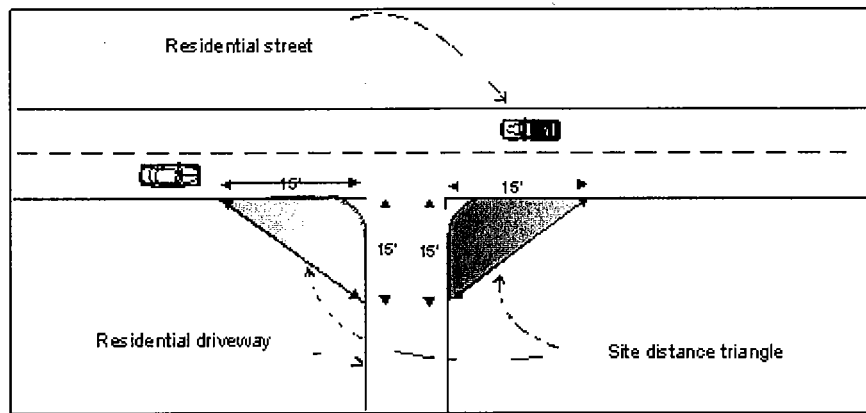
All fences, regardless of height, must meet sight distance requirements as described below. The sight distance is an area that must be kept unob-structed, so that drivers pulling out of driveways or intersections can see oncoming traffic and pedestrians.

The following sight distance provisions shall apply to all intersections and site access points. A sight distance triangle shall contain no fence, berm, vegetation, signs or other physical obstruction between 30” and 7’-6” above the existing street grade:

1. Trees, overhangs, eaves cannot extend below 7’-6” (6’ residential).
2. Hedges, shrubs, retaining walls, fences can be up to 30” high.
3. Open area must be maintained between 30” and 7’-6” high (6’ residential).

### How to measure a sight distance triangle

For a DRIVEWAY INTERSECTION WITH STREET: Measure 15’ along the street on both sides of the driveway and 15’ along the edges of the driveway beginning at the respective points of intersection. The third side of each triangle is a line connecting the endpoints of the first two sides



**Example of a sight distance triangle**

For fences on a street corner, the site distance measurement will depend on the type of streets that intersect. Please refer to the Shoreline Development Code Section 20.70.190.

## **Trellises and Arbors**

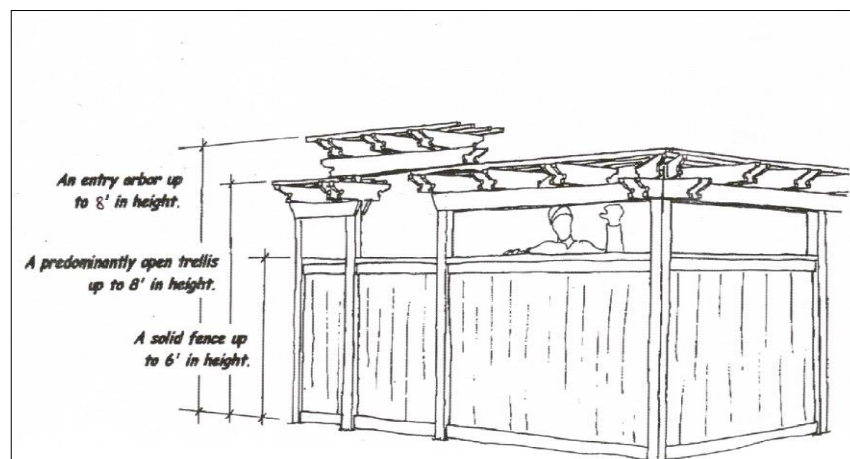
An arbor or trellis is a landscape feature consisting of an open frame with horizontal and/or vertical latticework. It must be at least 50% open (for arbors, both the sides and the roof must be 50% open). Landscaping supported by the trellis or arbor can grow over the height limit. Sight distance requirements must be met (see Sight Distance Triangle, page 1).

## **Trellis**

A trellis that is eight feet or less may be located on the property line. A building permit is not required to build a trellis that is eight feet or less, unless it is in an environmentally critical area.

## **Arbor**

An arbor that is 40 square feet including eaves or less and eight feet or less in height may be built on the property line (it does not have to meet setbacks). A building permit is not required to build an arbor that is eight feet high or less and 20 square feet or less (unless it will be in an environmentally critical area).



**Example of a combined fence, trellis, and arbor**